

knowledge of Chilean bird distribution, and Robert S. Ridgely for commenting on a draft of this note. This is contribution number 642 of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

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IN BRIEF

FIRST RECORD OF KEMP'S LONGBILL *MACROSPHENUS KEMPI*
IN CAMEROON

Kemp's Longbill *Macrosphenus kempii* is known to occur locally in forest from Sierra Leone, southeastern Guinea and Liberia to the Niger River in southeastern Nigeria (Hall & Moreau 1970, Keith in prep.). On 30 May 1992, one was seen in the northern part of Korup National Park, Southwest Province, Cameroon (5°16'N, 9°11'E). It was distinguished from the other two *Macrosphenus* found in this region, *flavicans* and *concolor*, by its entirely dark brown upperparts, grey throat, breast and centre of belly, and prominent reddish-chestnut flanks which are characteristic of the subspecies *flammeus* of

southeastern Nigeria (Marchant 1950). Also noted were a pale-coloured eye and a distinctive song which was a series of about eight clear whistles, rising slightly in pitch. An imitation of the song lured the bird to within 8 m. The bird was found in dense undergrowth of lowland primary forest. S. Keen subsequently observed two individuals including an apparent juvenile (dull plumage) in the same area on 25 November 1992, and CGRB saw one there on 12 March 1994. PGR had a probable sighting of the species about 2 km away on 12 June 1991.

These observations are the first records of the species for Cameroon, and extend its range *c.* 240 km eastwards. The presence of *M. kempfi* in Korup National Park is of particular interest because it is apparently the only site where *M. kempfi* and the Yellow Longbill *M. flavicans* are sympatric. These two forms have been considered conspecific by some authors (Serle & Morel 1977, Elgood 1982), but most authors now consider them separate species (Hall & Moreau 1970, Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1973, Collar & Stuart 1985, Sibley & Monroe 1990, Keith in prep.). In addition to their sympatry, with no evidence of intergradation (*M. flavicans* is fairly common in Korup), it is noteworthy that the song we heard was quite different from that of *M. flavicans* that we know from this part of Cameroon, which is a series of whistles descending in pitch, similar to that of Brown-chested Alethe *Alethe poliocephala* (Chappuis 1979), whilst the song of *M. kempfi* rose slightly in pitch and seemed slower in delivery. It should be noted, however, that Keith (in prep.) mentions another song of *M. kempfi* which is quite similar to that of *M. flavicans*. There seems no doubt that *M. kempfi* and *M. flavicans* are specifically distinct.

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28 December 1993

GREAT BLUE HERONS *ARDEA HERODIAS* AND
MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRDS *FREGATA MAGNIFICENS* FEEDING
ON YOUNG TURTLES

On 25 June 1990, on a sandy beach on the north coast of Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, two Great Blue Herons *Ardea herodias* were watched feeding on young Pacific Green Turtles *Chelodia mydas*. A number of these turtles had evidently laid eggs in nests situated in the low sand dune ridge at the back of the beach, and these eggs were in the process of hatching, with young turtles approximately 5 cm in length emerging from the sand and immediately heading for the sea. The two herons were some 50 m apart and both spent the period from 14.30 to 18.00 hours feeding on the young turtles. One of the herons was watched continuously for an hour and during this period it rested for a total of 11 minutes, and caught and ate a total of 9 young turtles. Casual observation of the second heron showed a similar pattern of activity. Assuming a fairly consistent feeding pattern this works out at one turtle for every 5.4 minutes of feeding activity, so the total number of turtles taken by these two birds during the afternoon must have been considerable (approximately 100). It was of interest to see that 6 of the turtles caught within the one-hour period were taken before they had emerged onto the surface of the sand, but it was not possible to ascertain whether they were first detected by sound or by the slight movement of sand grains on the surface of the dune. The prey were usually caught cross-wise in the bill and then tossed in the air until they could be swallowed head first. The taking of turtles by this species is not mentioned specifically by Bent (1926, *Life Histories of North American Marsh Birds*), Palmer (1962, *Handbook of North American Birds*, vol. 1) or Hancock & Kushlan (1984, *The Herons Handbook*).

At 1730 hours two Magnificent Frigatebirds *Fregata magnificens* arrived and spent 15 minutes hovering low over the sand and picking off young turtles that had escaped the attentions of the herons. Frigatebirds are known to catch significant numbers of newly hatched turtles on beaches.

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27 January 1994